

What is claimed is:

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1. A method of conducting an auction over a network,  
5 comprising:

displaying an item which will be the subject of an  
auction, said displaying comprising providing a view of the  
item over the network, which allows the item to be viewed from  
at least multiple different perspectives; and

10 accepting bids for purchase of the item over the network.

2. A method as in claim 1, wherein said providing a  
view comprises allowing the item to be viewed three-  
dimensionally.

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3. A method as in claim 1, wherein said providing a  
view comprises first providing a first resolution view of the  
item, and loading views from said at least multiple  
perspectives while the first resolution view of the item is  
20 being displayed.

4. A method as in claim 3, wherein said multiple perspectives include a three-dimensional view of the object.

25 5. A method, comprising:

allowing each of a plurality of users to submit bids for a specified item being auctioned, said bids being submitted from any of a number of clients over a network to a server which collects said bids; and

30 defining rules for actions in said auction, said rules including at least a time when the action will take place, and an actual action that will take place at the defined time.

35 6. A method as in claim 5, wherein said actions are bids to take place at the defined time.

7. A method as in claim 5, wherein said actions are allowing override of a previous bid.

40 8. A method as in claim 5, wherein said rules are kept secret until the defined time.

9. A method of conducting an auction over a network, comprising:

45 for any particular auction, sending information from a server computer to a local computer, which information enables the local computer to carry out some function associated with bidding on an item;

making a decision at the local computer to accept or  
50 reject a new bid from a user at the local computer; and  
only if the new bid is accepted at said local computer,  
sending information about the new bid to the server computer.

10. A method as in claim 9, wherein said information

55 includes information about a bid amount which will be necessary for the user at the local computer to be a highest bidder, and wherein said accepting a bid comprises comparing a local bid to said highest bid information, and sending said information to said server computer only when said local bid  
60 is higher than said highest bid information.

11. A method as in claim 9, further comprising automatically updating each of a plurality of computers with new information.

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12. A method of conducting an auction over a network, comprising:

displaying an item for sale on each of a plurality of  
client computers associated with the network, based on  
70 commands from a server computer;

accepting bids from any of the client computers, and  
communicating information about accepted bids to said server  
computer; and

wherein said displaying comprises displaying a winning  
75 bid amount which allows a user to automatically become the  
winning bidder.

13. A method as in claim 12, wherein said winning bid  
amount is an amount higher than a current minimum bid amount.

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14. A method as in claim 12, further comprising  
automatically determining an action which represents change in  
an auction condition, and automatically updating said  
displaying to change based on said automatically determining.

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15. A method, comprising:  
displaying an item for sale by auction over a network;  
and  
allowing entering either a bid for said item, or an  
90 amount that automatically wins the auction.

16. A method as in claim 15, further comprising automatically updating at least parts of the display seen by a plurality of users indicative of the item for sale.

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17. A method as in claim 15, wherein said displaying an item for sale comprises displaying a three-dimensional view of the item for sale.

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18. A method as in claim 15, further comprising displaying a screen tip indicating bid amounts.

19. A method as in claim 15, wherein said network is the Internet.

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20. A method, comprising:

displaying an item for sale over the Internet, by causing said item to be displayed on each of a plurality of client computers associated with the Internet, based on commands from a server computer; and

displaying information associated with the bid for the item in a screen tip associated with the item when a cursor is placed over the item on one of the client computers.

115        20. A method as in claim 19, wherein said information  
associated with the bid for the item is a current bid amount.

21. A method as in claim 19, wherein said information  
associated with the bid for the item is a bid amount, and  
120 further comprising allowing the user to accept a bid amount  
associated with a screen tip.

22. A method of conducting an auction over a network,  
comprising:

125        for any particular auction of an item, sending  
information to a plurality of local computers which enables  
the local computers to carry out some function associated with  
bidding on the item;  
displaying said information on said local computers;  
130 automatically updating said displaying on each of said  
plurality of computers with new information.

23. A method as in claim 22, wherein said automatically  
updating comprises automatically refreshing a Web browser  
135 running on computers associated with said at least some of  
said plurality of users.

24. A method as in claim 22, wherein said automatically  
140 updating comprising using streaming video to form certain  
parts of said view.

25. A method as in claim 22, wherein said automatically  
145 updating comprises using stop motion video to form certain  
parts of said view.

26. A method as in claim 22, further comprising  
150 determining an action representing a change in an auction  
condition, and wherein said automatically updating is  
responsive to said determining.

27. A method comprising:  
155 conducting an auction over a network by accepting bids for  
items, and establishing a highest bid for an item as being a  
winning bid; and

treating a bid received within a predetermined period of time  
before an end time of an auction less favorably than bids  
received prior to said predetermined period.

28. A method as in claim 27, further comprising allowing a  
160 seller to select an amount of time defining said predetermined  
period.

29. A method as in claim 27, further comprising determining a  
bid received within said predetermined period of time that was  
165 placed by a bidder who has previously participated in other  
bids prior to said predetermined period of time, and not  
treating said bid by said bidder less favorably.

30. A method as in claim 27, wherein said conducting  
170 comprises accepting bids in a first way which keeps bids at a  
low level less than a maximum bid but high enough to win a  
specified auction, and said treating comprises accepting bids  
at a maximum amount without keeping them at said low level.

175 31. A method comprising:  
conducting an auction over a network by accepting bids for  
items, and establishing a highest bid for an item as being a  
winning bid;  
determining identities of bidders bidding during said  
180 conducting; and  
treating a bid from bidders whose identities have not been  
determined by said determining, and which bids are received  
within a predetermined period of time before an end time of an  
auction, less favorably than bids received prior to said  
185 predetermined period.